

## REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This paper is submitted in response to the Office Action mailed January 27, 2005. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-12 were examined. Claim 1 was rejected, and claims 2-12 were objected to as depending from a rejected claim, but were held to define allowable subject matter. By this amendment, claim 1 has been amended, claim 2 has been canceled, claim 3 has been amended to depend from claim 1, and new claims 13-18 have been added.

Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating the allowable subject matter of claim 2, which has been canceled as redundant. Claim 3 has been amended to depend from amended claim 1. Claims 4-12 depend from amended claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, and 3-12, as amended, are allowable over the art of record.

New independent claim 13 has been added, as well as claims 14-18, which depend from claim 13. It is respectfully submitted that these new claims define patentably over the cited reference (US 4,310,937 – Karl et al.), taken singly or in combination with the other art of record.

Claim 13 defines a bottom-tensioned riser system, comprising, *inter alia*, a tubular conduit suspended from the platform and having a bottom end extending downward therefrom in a substantially vertical direction and toward the sea floor; and a connection and tensioning assembly disposed at the bottom end of the conduit, the connection and tensioning assembly comprising a weight connected to the bottom of the conduit and applying a vertical tension in the conduit. The Karl et al. reference, by contrast, discloses a top-tensioned system, in which tension is applied to an anchor leg or riser 14 by a flotation device (buoy 12), rather than a weight. The conduit 36 in the reference does not extend downward in a vertical direction toward the seafloor, but rather it extends substantially horizontally, and vertically downward only deep enough for attachment to the buoy 12. There is no suggestion of a tensioning weight at the

bottom end of the conduit 36, since the bottom end of the conduit is attached only to the floating buoy.

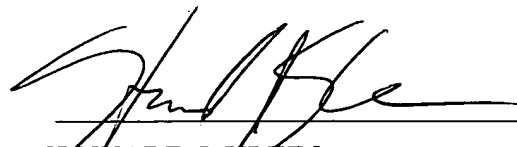
Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the cited reference neither teaches nor suggests the invention defined in claim 13. It is further respectfully submitted that nothing in Karl et al. suggests that it may be combined in any way with the other art of record to provide the invention defined in claim 13. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 13 defines patentably over the art of record. Claims 14-18 depend from claim 13 and recite other features not shown or suggested in the claimed combination by the art of record. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claims 13-18 define patentably over the art of record.

Amended drawings sheets 1-5 are submitted herewith, in which reference numerals called out in the specification have been added. There is no new matter introduced.

In summary, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 3-18, as amended define patentably over the art of record, and should therefore be allowed. Passage of the application to issue is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Amendments to the Drawings:

Submitted herewith are replacement sheets 1-5, containing Figures 1-6. Figures 1-4 have been amended by the addition of the reference numerals called out in the Specification. Figure 5 has been amended by the addition of the reference numerals "32" and "34" which were likewise called out in the Specification. No new matter has been added.